

# January

## Health Activities and Observances

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## National Birth Defects Prevention Month

## National Eye Care Month

## National Glaucoma Awareness Month

## National Volunteer Blood Donor Month

## Cervical Health Awareness Month

## Healthy Weight Week (18-24)

*Today, women in contemporary*

*America are furthering the*

**Founders' vision by working to**

*advance freedom, increase equality,*

*and administer justice in every*

*corner of our land, through their*

*everyday work in schoolrooms,*

*boardrooms, courtrooms, homes,*

*and communities.*

-President Bush



# January

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12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

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# January

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Tue 13 \_\_\_\_\_ Tue 20 \_\_\_\_\_

Wed 14 \_\_\_\_\_ Wed 21 \_\_\_\_\_

Thu 15 \_\_\_\_\_ Thu 22 \_\_\_\_\_

Fri 16 \_\_\_\_\_ Fri 23 \_\_\_\_\_

Sat 17 \_\_\_\_\_ Sat 24 \_\_\_\_\_

Sun 18 \_\_\_\_\_ Sun 25 \_\_\_\_\_

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# Wellness starts with... Physical Activity

It's the start of the new year, and you may be thinking about getting into shape. If you think you're too busy with work, family, and all the other demands in your life, listen up! You don't have to be as fit as a professional athlete to benefit from physical activity. In fact, 30 minutes of moderate physical activity on most days of the week can greatly improve your health.

## Physical Activity Improves Your Health

A growing number of women are overweight or obese. Being overweight or obese increases your risk of heart disease, type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, stroke, breathing problems, arthritis, gallbladder disease, sleep apnea (breathing problems while sleeping), osteoarthritis, and some cancers. Obesity is measured with a body mass index (BMI). BMI shows the relationship of weight to height. Women with a BMI of 25 to 29.9 are considered overweight, whereas women with a BMI of 30 or more are considered obese. All adults (aged



### **An active lifestyle can help every woman. Being physically active can provide these benefits:**

- reduces your risk of dying from heart disease or stroke
- lowers your risk of getting heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure, colon cancer, and diabetes
- lowers high blood pressure
- helps keep your bones, muscles, and joints healthy
- reduces anxiety and depression and improves your mood
- helps you handle stress
- helps control your weight
- protects against falling and bone fractures in older adults
- may help protect against breast cancer
- helps control joint swelling and pain from arthritis
- gives you more energy
- helps you sleep better
- helps you look better

18 years or older) who have a BMI of 25 or more are considered at risk for premature death and disability from being overweight or obese. These health risks increase as the BMI rises. Your health care provider can help you figure out your body mass, or you can go to [www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/bmi/calc-bmi.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/bmi/calc-bmi.htm).

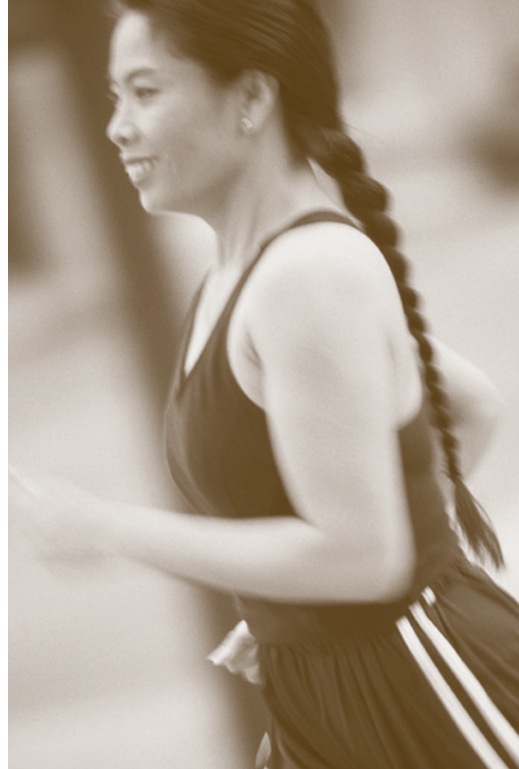
Not only are health care providers concerned about how much fat a person has, but also where the fat is located on the body. Women with a “pear” shape tend to store fat in their hips and buttocks. Women with an “apple” shape store fat around their waists. For most women, carrying extra weight around their waists or middle (with a waist larger than 35 inches) raises health risks (like heart disease, diabetes, or cancer) more than carrying extra weight around their hips or thighs. If you are overweight or obese, losing weight can lower your risk for many diseases. And physical activity is an important part of weight loss treatment.

### Prevent Injuries

If you're not active at all or have a medical problem, start your program with short sessions (5 to 10 minutes) of physical activity and build up to your goal. Before you start your activity, be sure to warm up for 5 to 10 minutes. Use the right equipment—whether it's walking shoes, running shoes, or knee pads—make sure it's in good condition and right for your skill level. Drink water before, during, and after exercise. At the end of your physical activity, cool down by decreasing the intensity of your activity so your heartbeat is normal. Be sure to stretch. If your chest feels tight or painful, or you feel faint or have trouble breathing at any time, stop the activity right away and talk to your health care provider.

### Size Doesn't Matter

Very large people face special challenges trying to be active. You may not be able to bend or move in the same way that other people can. It may be hard to find clothes and equipment for exercising. You may feel self-conscious being active around other people. Facing these challenges is hard, but



it can be done! The Weight Control Information Network says that non-weight-bearing activities, like swimming or water workouts, put less stress on your joints because you don't have to lift or push your own weight. If your feet or joints hurt when you stand, non-weight-bearing activities may be best for you. If you can't do an activity, don't be hard on yourself. Be proud of pushing yourself up out of a chair or walking a short distance. Pat yourself on the back for trying even if you can't do it the first time. It may be easier the next time—so try again! Remember to appreciate what you can do, even if you think it's a small amount. Just moving any part of your body—even for a short time—can make you healthier.

**Steps You Can Take to Get Moving**  
**(It's easy to add 30 minutes of physical activity into your day!)**

- Choose an activity that's fun.
- Change your activities, so you don't get bored.
- Doing housework may not be fun, but it does get you moving! So does gardening, yard work, and walking the dog.
- If you can't set aside one block of time, do short activities during the day, such as three, 10-minute walks.
- Create opportunities for activity, such as parking your car farther away, taking the stairs instead of the elevator, or walking down the hall to talk to a coworker instead of using e-mail.
- Don't let the cold weather keep you on the couch! You can still find activities to do in the winter like exercising to a workout video or joining a sports league. Or get a head start on your spring cleaning by choosing active indoor chores like window washing or reorganizing closets.
- Use different jogging, walking, or biking paths to vary your routine.
- Exercise with a friend or family member.
- If you have children, make time to play with them outside. Set a positive example!
- Make activities into social occasions—have dinner after you and a friend work out.
- Read books or magazines to inspire you.
- Set specific, short-term goals, and reward yourself when you achieve them.
- Don't feel badly if you don't notice body changes right away.
- Make your activity a regular part of your day, so it becomes a habit.
- Build a community group to form walking clubs, build walking trails, start exercise classes, and organize special events to promote physical activity.

**Talk to your health care provider before you start any physical activity if you:**

- have heart disease or had a stroke or are at high risk for them
- have diabetes or are at high risk for it
- are obese (body mass index of 30 or greater)
- have an injury (like a knee injury)
- are older than age 50
- are pregnant

**Living with a Disability and Staying Active**

One of the best things you can do for your health is to find an activity that gets your body moving and stick with it. You may be limited by a disability. This disability may make it harder, but it doesn't

need to stop you from staying active. In most cases, people with disabilities can improve their heart, lungs, muscles, and bones—in addition to flexibility, mobility, and coordination—by becoming physically active. Talk to your health care provider about your personal needs.

For more information on physical activity and obesity, check out these resources:

**HealthierUS.gov**

Internet: [www.healthierus.gov](http://www.healthierus.gov)

## The President's Council on Physical Fitness & Sports

Internet: [www.fitness.gov](http://www.fitness.gov)

Phone: 202-690-9000

## Obesity Education Initiative

**National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute**

Internet: [www.nhlbi.nih.gov/about/oei](http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/about/oei)

Phone: 301-592-8573

## Weight Control Information Network

Internet: [www.niddk.nih.gov/health/nutrit/win.htm](http://www.niddk.nih.gov/health/nutrit/win.htm)

Phone: 877-946-4627

### Publications:

## Active at Any Size

Internet: [www.niddk.nih.gov/health/nutrit/  
activeatanysize/active.html](http://www.niddk.nih.gov/health/nutrit/activeatanysize/active.html)

## Frequently Asked Questions about Obesity

Internet: [www.4woman.gov/faq/obesity.htm](http://www.4woman.gov/faq/obesity.htm)

## Physical Activity

Internet: [www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/physical](http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/physical)

### Exercise for Older Adults

Internet: <http://nihseniorhealth.gov/exercise/toc.html>

*Exercise: A Guide from the National Institute on Aging*

Internet: [www.nia.nih.gov/exercisebook](http://www.nia.nih.gov/exercisebook)

My fitness goals: \_\_\_\_\_